

Monthly Musings



courtesy of Fletcher Consulting

P.O. Box 1191
Arlington, TX 76004
(817) 205-2334 • Fax (817) 796-2087
Email: john@thefletch.org

Get **Linked in** with John at:
www.linkedin.com/in/johnfletcherpr
Read John's blog on
www.thefletch.org

VOL. 13-1 • JANUARY 2021

SMART DECISION:

Budweiser Pulls Out of Super Bowl

The news was astounding when six major stalwarts opted out of this year's Super Bowl LV advertising campaigns. **Coca-Cola, Ford, Olay, Hyundai, Little Caesar's** and **Avocados from Mexico** will not air commercials in the big game on February 7.

The even larger shocker came Monday when **Budweiser** announced that its commercials, which often bring our nation together with a touch of the heart or a smile, is stepping away, as well.

Budweiser is making a brilliant move by reallocating \$10-20 million to raise awareness about the Covid vaccine throughout the year.

Experts are not surprised about the defections because most Super Bowl ads are often produced months in advance.

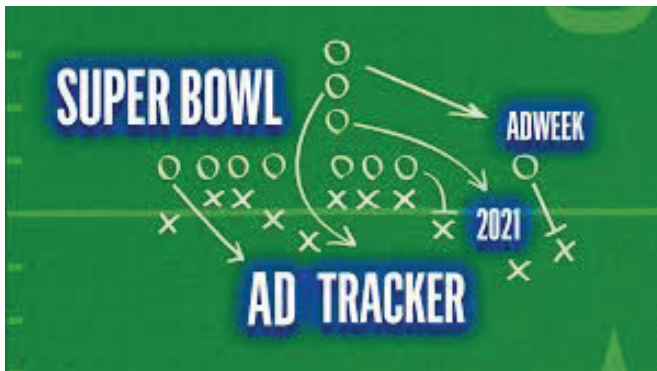
With the social unrest in the nation combined with fears of Covid, a contentious presidential election and concerns for the economy, many advertisers fear an environment where literally any ad can offend someone and end up as a disaster on social media. We have a society that's on edge.

Hopefully, "cancel culture" can settle down. Speaking of which...

Budweiser Pulls Out of Super Bowl

... advertisers fear an environment where literally any ad can offend someone

Hopefully, our "cancel culture" can settle down.



SMART DECISION:

Avoid "Cancel Culture" Boycotts

This past election period – along with the months leading up to November – was particularly boisterous and contentious. Most recently, we have seen two attempted boycotts that turned into "Boycotts," where all the negative publicity actually created a movement of the opposing party.

When progressives boycotted **Goya Foods** because the company's CEO praised President Trump at the Hispanic Prosperity Initiative event, Goya's sales soared because conservatives responded to prevent this businessman from being harmed merely for complimenting a controversial president.

The same boycott-to-boycott occurred even more recently when progressives attempted to punish Mike Lindell, CEO of **My Pillow**, for supporting the president. In addition to the boycotts, retailers including Kohl's, Bed Bath & Beyond and Wayfair dropped the brand, saying they disagreed with his stance that the election had been stolen.

Consider that this can be, in large part, a numbers game.

For example, if My Pillow sells its products to 10 million customers over a year and 80 million progressives are convinced to turn against him, 75 million conservatives are likely to be solid prospects to buy from his company.

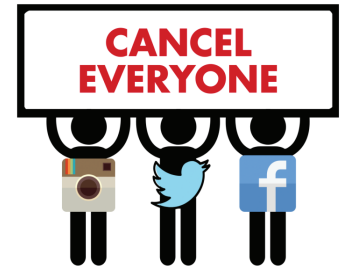
He loses one customer base (non-political) and picks up another because they are responding emotionally.

The same philosophy has worked when conservatives boycotted brands, only to see progressives step up to protect companies that agreed with their philosophy.

The conservative group, One Million Moms, launched a boycott against **Nabisco's Oreo Cookies** after the brand created a pro-LGBTQ+ advertising campaign. Progressives embraced Oreo Cookies and sales increased during and after the boycott.

Conservative sporting goods stores reported backlashes in response to dropping **Nike** products as a protest to Nike signing Colin Kaepernick to endorse the brand's "Just Do It" campaign.

Boycotts tend to have short-term consequences – except for the Boston Tea Party in December 1773, which helped lead to our



John Fletcher is a recognized authority on the subject of effective communications.

He is available for speech-crafting, public speaking engagements and consulting on a project basis.

nation's call for freedom and break from England.

By the way, the highest single day of revenue for **Chick-fil-A** came when its customers rallied to its defense following a highly publicized boycott.

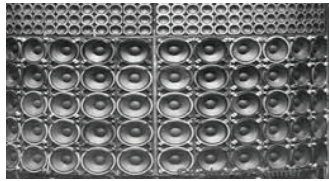
SMART CREATIVITY:

Where is Your "Tunnel"?

How many times have you read or heard about a hot new product and realized that you thought of the concept some time ago but never pursued it? **This could be your magical moment!**

One of music's most prolific innovators died recently and he taught us about innovation that can change your new 2021.

Phil Spector – yes, I recognize that he was a convicted murderer, and he had a checkered past – noticed something on a daily route that revolutionized the music recording industry. The question for each of us is: **How we can pay attention to seemingly mundane things around us and benefit from them?**



He noticed the sound within a tunnel near Hollywood Boulevard created a roaring effect. As a result, he developed a technique of overdubbing scores of musicians in an orchestral style to make a fuller, more complex sound.

He called the process "**The Wall of Sound**," which is far more complex than simply turning up the volume on all the music.

Anyone could do that!

He used the technique for such top selling artists as **The Righteous Brothers** ("You've Lost That Loving Feeling"), **the Beatles** ("The Long and Winding Road", "Let It Be" and "Get Back") and **Tina Turner** ("River Deep, Mountain High").

The legendary Cher often sang back-up vocals for him early in her career.

He also inspired the Beach Boys and Bruce Springsteen to change their production style.

Today, when you drive to work, to an appointment or on an errand, you could be passing a landmark or an interaction among two or more people that could revolutionize you personally and your business future.

Your "Aha Moment" could be from seeing an interesting phrase on a billboard or hearing something on the radio.

Once you encounter your own "tunnel," write it down immediately or at least press the "record" button on your smartphone to record your impression.

Then ask, **"What can I do to fully determine its potential?"**

SMART PUBLICITY:

iHOP/iHOB Again

iHOP has done it again, going with iHOB. Or possibly iHOBB. This new publicity stunt – two years after iHOB stood for

International House of Burgers in 2018 – solely to promote its burger menu – is now "changing" its name to promote an additional letter "B". International House of Burritos & Bowls.

Yesterday the brand introduced its six new offerings that can be served up inside a bowl or a burrito, which makes them easy for on-the-go dining. A foxnews.com story reports that that four will feature eggs as breakfast entrees and the other two will become egg-less burritos.

Kudos to iHO - whatever it is - for continuing to innovate.

But don't count out Denny's, because that brand learned from the iHOB stunt. Starting next month, Denny's will roll out two virtual brands in selected markets: The Burger Den and The Melt Down.

National Restaurant News reports that the two concepts allow **Denny's** to offer new products while still using only ingredients currently in its pantry.

Denny's will launch The Burger Den brand through DoorDash, Postmates and Uber Eats, and it should increase the share of burgers in its sales profile.

Meantime, The Melt Down will feature sandwiches offering brisket burnt ends, sharp white cheddar cheese, BBQ sauce and pickles on artisan bread, as well as a turkey melt.

If I had to project the more successful brand, I'll go with The Burger Den because chain mainstream restaurants are rarely known for tasty BBQ.

THE Tiebreaker

Falling Into Place

This past year has been challenging for all of us. Even those businesses that have had experienced tremendous success (any drive-through restaurant selling chicken, hardware stores, landscaping, construction, restoration and carpet cleaning services, among others) became stressed in their ability to schedule labor when employees caught Covid.

Many of them faced challenges in their supply chain because suppliers were often receiving only partial shipments.

Other business categories such as sit-down restaurants, hair salons and non-essential health care practices have struggled mightily. A great number of those businesses have closed.

I want to end this month's edition of Monthly Musings with a moment of hope for 2021 – something that can inspire you to find greater success in this new year.

My earlier article about innovation and how a music producer discovered a new technique simply by passing through a tunnel can give us inspiration for our own next successes.

I leave you with a paraphrase of Romans 8:28 from the New Testament – I shared it last month and it's worth reading again.

This contemporary version states: **Sometimes when things are falling apart, they may actually be falling into place.**

